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CAMBODIA-A YEAR OF COMMUNIST RULE

ANNCR:

CAMBODIA'S NEW LEADER KHIEU SAMPHAN HAS REPORTED ON THE STATE OF THAT COUNTRY A YEAR AFTER ITS TAKEOVER BY A COMMUNIST REGIME. VOA'S EDWARD CONLEY HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS.

VOICE:

A SPEECH BY CAMBODIA'S NEWLY NAMED LEADER KHIEU SAMPHAN ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF COMMUNIST MILITARY TAKEOVER OF THAT COUNTRY SPEAKS IN POSITIVE TERMS OF "ADVANCES" MADE BY CAMBODIANS. BUT A CLOSE LOOK AT THAT ADDRESS LEAVES THE STRONG IMPRESSION THAT THE "ADVANCES" HAVE BEEN MINIMAL.

THE CAMBODIAN LEADER SPEAKS OF A RECORD HARVEST OF RICE AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS DURING THE RECENT DRY SEASON. HE ADDS THAT THE HARVEST PROVIDED ONLY A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY OF GRAIN TO, AS HE PUT IT, FUNDAMENTALLY SOLVE CAMBODIA'S FOOD PROBLEM.

BASED ON REPORTS OF REFUGEES WHO HAVE FLED CAMBODIA ON THE FORCED MIGRATION OF MOST OF THE POPULACE TO WORK THE RICE FIELDS, IT APPEARS THAT THEIR SUFFERING, TOIL AND THE UNTOLD NUMBER OF DEATHS RESULTING FROM THEM HAVE PRODUCED THE BAREST ESSENTIALS FOR THE SURVIVORS. IF THIS IS THE CASE -- AS IT SEEMS -- CAMBODIANS CAN EXPECT LITTLE LETUP IN THE HARSH WORK CONDITIONS WHICH DURING THE PAST YEAR HAVE REPORTEDLY CAUSED IMMENSE SUFFERING. AS KHIEU SAMPHAN STATED "WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO DO, AND OUR ROAD IS STILL LONG." FOR THE CAMBODIAN TOILING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF ARMED KHMER ROUGE SOLDIERS, THERE COULD BE LITTLE SIGN OF LETUP IN SAMPHAN'S EXHORTATION TO STRIVE "BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS TO BUILD THE COUNTRY."

SAMPHAN HOLDS OUT LITTLE HOPE FOR AN OPENING OF WHAT HAS BECOME THE MOST CLOSED SOCIETY IN ASIA. (OPT) PROCLAIMING FRIENDSHIP WITH WHAT HE CALLS THE WORLD'S REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT, THE CAMBODIAN LEADER STRESSES THAT CAMBODIAN GAINS, WHATEVER THEY MAY BE, ARE BASED ON THE STAND OF INDEPENDENCE, SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-RELIANCE. THE COUNTRY IS BEING RUN.. FROM ITS NEW GOVERNMENT APPARATUS DOWN, BY THE WORKERS, PEASANTS AND REVOLUTIONARY ARMY. (END OPT)

THAT CAMBODIA HAS BEEN FORCED BACK TO A FUNDAMENTAL, GROUND-UP REBUILDING AND SOCIAL REORIENTATION CAN BE SEEN IN THE WORDS OF SAMPHAN...A FORMER SCHOOL TEACHER. HE PRAISES THE FACT THAT THE COUNTRY'S NEW CONSTITUTION WAS NOT WRITTEN BY SCHOLARS OR HISTORIANS...BUT PUT TOGETHER BY PEASANTS, WORKERS AND THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY. ALSO EVIDENT IS THE APPARANT AIM OF CAMBODIA'S NEW RULERS TO CUT OFF ALL TIES WITH THE COUNTRY'S PAST. JUST A FEW DAYS AFTER THE RETIREMENT OF FORMER CAMBODIAN PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK FROM PUBLIC LIFE, THE COMMUNIST REGIME IS SEEMINGLY ATTEMPTING TO TURN THE PEOPLE'S ATTENTION FROM PERHAPS ITS MOST HISTORIC CULTURAL TREASURE...THE TEMPLES AT ANGKOR.

ACCORDING TO KHIEU SAMPHAN, LAST YEAR'S COMMUNIST BATTLE-FIELD VICTORY WAS MORE BRILLIANT AND SPLLENDID THAN ANGKOR... THE GREATEST VICTORY IN CAMBODIA'S TWO THOUSAND YEAR HISTORY. "THE DARK PAST CAN NEVER RETURN," SAID SAMPHAN, AS THE NEW, CLOSED CAMBODIA CELEBRATED ITS FIRST BIRTHDAY.

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